2. The Chief Executives of the banks have been advised to pay their personal attention to the monitoring of large advances.

3. Introduction of a comprehensive and uniform grading system to indicate the health of individual advances for the purpose of their effective monitoring and follow up.

4. To keep a watch on the recovery of top sticky accounts at the board level.

5. Taking action against the officials where advances are found to have become sticky due to their negligence, inefficiency etc.

Relaxation in restrictions on Imports

3007. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Reserve Bank of India has further relaxed or propose to relax restrictions on imports with immediate effect;

(b) if so, the relaxations made so far by the Reserve Bank of India during the current year; and

(c) to what extent these relaxations have been helpful to the importers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). In the context of the country's difficult balance of payment position and significantly larger monetised deficit, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had imposed certain restrictions on imports as a short term measure aimed at containing overall demand. However, depending on the foreign exchange reserves position, various relaxations have been made from time to time. Accordingly, the restrictions like prescribed minimum cash margin and interest rate surcharge in import finance have been fully removed. The question of further relaxations, therefore, does not arise. However, the restrictions on inventory norms continue as it will help in curbing inflationary pressure in the economy besides ensuring better management of inventory by the industry.

(c) While the relaxations indicated above have undeniably assisted importers, its precise extent is difficult to quantify.

Purchase of Arms from U.K.

3008. SHRI MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.K. has offered to sell defence equipment to India;

(b) whether the Government have accepted the offer; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b). Offers for sale of defence equipment, received from various countries including U.K., are evaluated from the technical and commercial angles and decisions for acquisition are taken on the basis of the merits of each case.

(c) It would not be in the interest of security to disclose specific details of such cases.

[*Translation*]

Drug Trafficking

3009. SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have directed the State Governments to formulate a proper strategy and appoint nodal officers with appropriate levels of authority to ensure speedy disposal of cases relating to drug trafficking;

(b) if so, the number of such cases pending with the States; and